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Quick Hits

Happy Thanksgiving! We wish all our readers a safe and happy holiday this week. For many of us this is a rare chance to gather with the whole family.

We here at The Review truly appreciate the support of our readers, and we have been honored to serve this community for several years now.

During your down time this week be sure to check out the fundraising drive by the Detroit City Football Club. Proceeds will go toward fixup Keyworth Stadium here in Hamtramck.

Keyworth is the new home playing field for the club, which will be a huge boost to the community and local businesses.

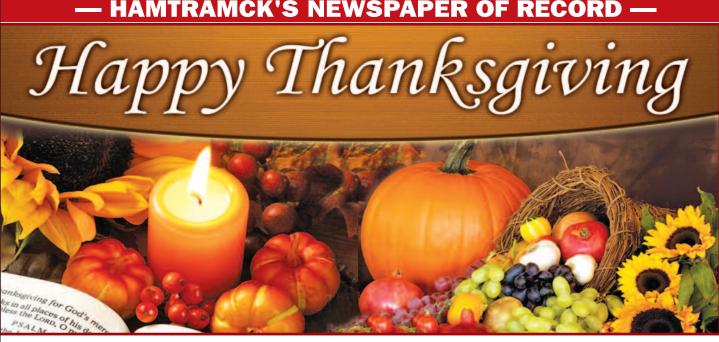
Check out www.det cityfc.com and if possible toss them a few bucks.



Quote of the week ...

Who said this, and what is it about? You can find the quote and the story it belongs to somewhere in the pages of this issue.

"Walking down **Hamtramck** is walking down different countries at the same time."



Walking tall: Bob Kozaren backed style with substance

By Greg Kowalski

(Second of two parts)

It was a chilly Friday afternoon; bright, but not exactly the type of day that encouraged you to go for a walk outside. Despite that, Hamtramck was on the verge of launching its first city festival.

Put together almost hastily, it was the child of then-new Mayor Robert Kozaren, who had taken office less than a year ear-

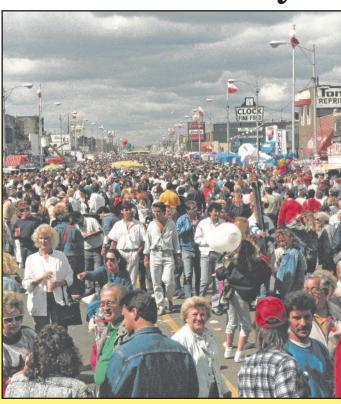
That was 1980, and it deed. Chrysler Corpora-Main factory and Hamtramck was wrestling with

its shaky economic future.

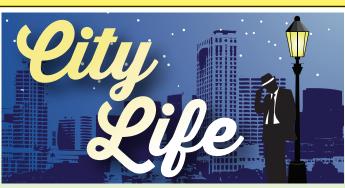
There was a sense of doom hanging over the whole community. In June, 1980, the city got some potentially good news when GM announced its plans to acquire the nowabandoned Dodge Main factory site to build a new assembly plant, but that was far from being a done deal. In fact, the obstacles standing in its way were immense.

In the meantime, Hamtramck was in limbo. It was had been a busy year in- not a place that Bob Kozaren wanted to be in, tion had closed the Dodge and while he couldn't propel the process to build

Continued on page 5



The Hamtramck Festival, created by former Mayor Robert Kozaren, grew to be enormously popular.



a column about walkable discovery in Hamtramck.)

When we set out on a stroll in the city you never know what might happen. adventures.

There are exceptions, of course. Sometimes we

walk to get to a place in a hurry, like to the post office or bank before closing time. Sometimes we know exactly where we are going and how long it will take to get there. Destination walking and city life go hand in hand.

But in Hamtramck opportunities abound for more creative experiences on foot. In fact, this town was designed for it.

streets and alleys (love the alleys as pedestrian cutthrough routes) since I was 11. That was 1966, a good year to become initiated into the urban walking

Back then it was mostly back and forth to Veterans Memorial Park, where I played Little League Baseball, or to Jos. Campau, where I bought my first rock 'n' roll and soul 45s at Old Town Records. When my friends and I were really adventurous we'd walk to the bus stop

Continued on page 6

A role reversal for city contractors

By Charles Sercombe

Little by little, City Manager Katrina Powell is cleaning house in city hall.

On top of her to do list have been some major city contractors.

It started with Platinum Landscaping, which over the last year received fewer and fewer calls for work.

Platinum once handled snow plowing and street salting service, among several other services, but this year the city is taking over that job. The city is about to purchase trucks and plows to perform the work through a one-time state grant.

Powell says that using city employees to take on the work of contractors is less expensive.

In the winter of 2014, the city paid Platinum \$800,000 for snow clearing and street salting services.

Powell is reversing a trend among city administrators who are shedding employees and contracting out work in order to save money in salaries, benefits and retirement.

When Lou Schimmel was Hamtramck's emergency manager in the early 2000s he closed down the Department of Public Works and farmed out that service.

Powell told The Review that the cost of contractors has ballooned over the years to the point where it is now less expensive to hire part-time employees to do the work.

By hiring part-timers the city saves money on benefits and is not obligated to fund pensions.

Continued on page 2

(Editor's note: City Life is **By Walter Wasacz**

Every walk is a way out of the repetitive boredom of everyday life, a way into the present filled with new

I've been walking these

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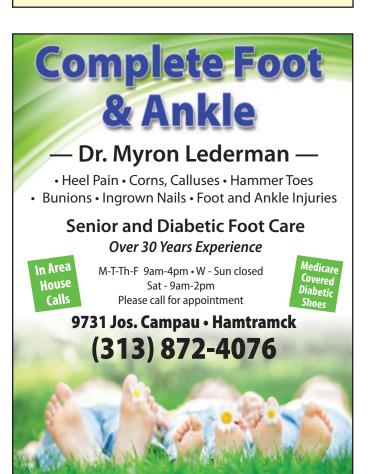


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A role reversal for city contractors

Continued from front page

But not all city contractors are accepting this new line of thinking. Recently, CPI Excavating, Inc. filed a lawsuit against the city claiming a breach of contract.

For the last 15 years, or so, CPI has repaired water and sewer lines. In its lawsuit, the company says its contract requires all work must go to them.

The company's attorney, Dean Elliott, says that since the lawsuit has been filed Powell has fired off letters accusing the company of failing to perform satisfactory work.

"As soon as we filed she wrote retaliatory letters to make the city look better," Elliot said.

Powell said she could not comment on the lawsuit because it is pending, but before it was filed she said she had shifted work performed by CPI back to the city.

"We are not terminating CPI's contract at this time. but we are doing more work with our in-house crew, versus using CPI for issues that we can handle, for efficiency, savings and in some cases a better quality of work," Powell said in an email to The Re-

"The Department of Public Services is doing everything they can to save the city money and provide topnotch service, in a timely

and efficient manner. As we continue to upgrade the infrastructure, we are constantly looking for ways to save money on some of the smaller issues, so that we can dedicate more to the larger problems we've had historically with maintenance and replacement of old infrastructure. The DPS Director, Mark Ragsdale, is always looking for creative ways to save money and be more cost effective, while providing a quality product."

Over the past three years CPI has been paid about \$1.5 million.

Another major contractor with the city, ADR Consultants, which provides IT services, is now getting the Powell cold shoulder. But instead of seeing calls for services disappear, the company's contract was terminated this week.

ADR has been paid about \$80,000 a year to help with the city's computer services as well as trouble-shoot email and internet problems.

City Treasurer John Gabor told the state-appointed Transition Advisory Board (TAB) that oversees all financial and contractual decisions for Hamtramck on Wednesday that the city will be rebidding the work out and expects to save anywhere from 30 to 40 percent.

The owner of ADR, Barry Ellentuck, declined to talk in detail about the city's action other than to say he "wishes the city the best in all its endeavors."

While not all city officials are happy with Powell's moves, the city council and mayor have little input on putting a halt to her actions. The city is still under the supervision of the state since it emerged last December from a financial

Powell no longer has to answer to the council, but

she must get the approval of the TAB. So far, she and the TAB have seen eye-toeye on most of her changes in city hall.

And so far, the city has remained out of a financial emergency and boasts of having a \$2 million budget surplus.



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at the Moose Lodge, 9421 Conant, Hamtramck \$10, \$5 for seniors 60+, \$3 for kids. Tickets on sale at the door

Second Front Page

Yemeni group seeks to build bridges in community

By Charles Sercombe

In an attempt to soothe the lingering tensions of the recent city council election, the Yemeni-American Leadership Association held a meeting last week to "build bridges" in the community.

Hamtramck's election received national and international media attention over the city being the first in the nation to have a Muslim majority on city council.

As it would be expected, a number of people responding to the dozens of stories and internet blogs were upset - to say the least - over this development.

About 100 people showed up at the Hamtramck High School Community Center last Wednesday evening. Most of those attending were men from the Yemeni and Bengali communities.

There were only five women in attendance, three of whom were with the school district. Three women also sat on the dais of about 10 community leaders: City Manager Katrina Powell, Police

Chief Anne Moise and Mayor Karen Majewski.

The organizer of the event, Dr. Khalid Almasmari, said that despite the differences, Hamtramck is unique in many

"Walking down Hamtramck is walking down different countries at the same time," he said.

Residents, he said, share "our love for our

The meeting followed a similar one hosted by the Piast Institute a week earlier. A Review reporter was not invited to that event, but it featured a crossrepresentation of community ethnic leaders.

One theme that ran through the evening was a need for more economic development, something that has plagued the city the past three for decades.

Almasmari expanded on that wish list to include safety, improved quality of life, fairness and equal opportunity.

"The only way to achieve these goals is to work together," Almasmari said.

Mayor Maiewski said that despite a number of negative comments about the election results in the media, she conceded Hamtramck is "not Disneyland."

"We live on top of each other," she said.

While this too-close-forcomfort living space sometimes grates on the nerves of residents, Majewski said it also brings the community closer.

"Sometimes we argue and fight, but that's what makes our city strong," she said.

Mike Duffy, representing OneHamtramck, a nonprofit community group, said that now that there is a Muslim majority on city council it's an opportunity for Hamtramck to show the nation that "Muslims can participate like anyone else."

Obituaries

DOMAGALA

Edward Domagala, 94, died September 10, 2015. Mr. Domagala was born on April 6, 1921.

Edward was a World War II veteran and a tool and die maker for Chrysler Corporation.

Mr. Domagala was preceded in death by his parents, Casmere and Stella; brother, Henry; wife, Sophia; brother-in-law, Adam Sarnacki. Mr. Domagala is survived by sister, Emily Sarnacki; many loving nieces

nephews. He will be dearly missed by family and friends.

A memorial Mass will be held Friday, December 11 at 6:30 p.m. at St. Florian Catholic Church, Florian at Lathem St. in Hamtramck, MI, 48212.

Arrangements made by Jurkiewicz & Wilk Funeral Home.









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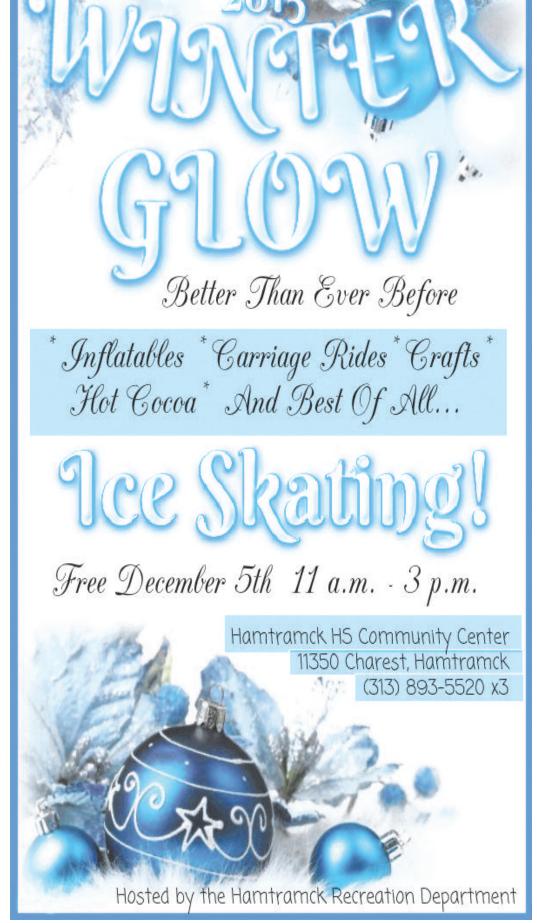
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Wayne County Treasurer honored for many years of service



By Charles Sercombe

Wayne County Treasurer Raymond Wojtowicz received a warm salute for his many years of service last Friday.

About 200 people showed up PNC Hall on Conant to pay their respects to one of the longest serving public

servants Wayne County.

Wojtowicz is stepping down in December after holding the position of treasurer for 39 years.

Among those attendwere numerous county officials and movers and shakers. His Deputy, former

David Szymanski, was also on hand. Szymanski retired a few months ago and is in the running to finish out Wojtowicz's term, which ends next December.

Among the movers and shakers was Fernando Palazuelo, the owner of the former Packard plant who plans a major redevelopment of the site.

Wojtowicz was also a former mayor of Hamtramck, and he still lives in the city.

Photos courtesy of Hamtramck School Boardmember Jackie Starr.



























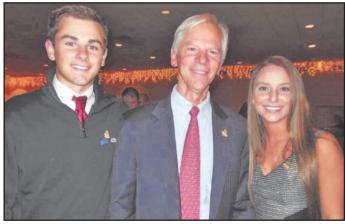






















SATURDAY, Dec. 5, 4-7 p.m.; SUNDAY, Dec. **6, 8 -11 a.m.** – Our Lady Queen of Apostles is holding a bake sale in the Activity Center, entrance on Harold. Proceeds benefit the 100th anniversary of the church. For more information call (313) 891-1520.

SATURDAY, Dec. 12, 9-3 p.m. - Hamtramck's Recycle Center is open at Caniff and McDougall. Drop of your recyclables for free.

WEDNESDY, Feb. 17, 7 p.m. - The Hamtramck Midtown Block Club will not meet during December and January 2015. In 2016, the block club will meet Wednesday, February 17, at 7 p.m. in St. Florian's Convent, 2626 Florian; please use the side entrance. Share information with your friends and neighbors and listen to guest speakers. Light refreshments will be served. Please invite others to join us.

Review: Opinion Page

In Our Opinion

In Hamtramck, we have plenty to be thankful for

This week is Thanksgiving, and in Hamtramck we have plenty to be thankful for.

The city has come under the microscope in the past couple of weeks, attracting the attention of national and international media. Hamtramck voters made history by electing the first-ever Muslim majority city council – possibly a first in any American city.

While there were plenty of the negative comments that you would expect from the haters out there, there were also a number of in-depth articles that gave a pretty good snapshot of Hamtramck's amazing cultural diversity.

Yes, there are tensions in the city. But Hamtramck has a long history of surviving. We say this year after year.

This is a transition period for the city. For sevdecades Polish-

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Americans have dominated the political landscape here, and now it looks like the city's growing Bangladeshi and Yemeni communities are poised to assume lead-

In two years, when the next round of elections occurs, we could likely see an all Muslim city government, including the mayor's position.

Or maybe not. Politics and elections are funny things, and we're lucky if we see 30 percent of the registered voters acparticipating. tually There are around 10,000 registered voters, which means a good 7,000 residents have vet to exercise their right to vote.

No matter what, we are a city guided by laws. No one ethnic group can circumvent that, which is a fear among some.

Not only that, Hamtramck is still under the thumb of the state

through a Transition Advisory Board, which has final say over all financial and contractual decisions.

On top of that, the role of mayor and city council has been greatly diminished since the state came in to manage a financial emergency.

We are out of that crisis now, but the state has vested more power with the city manager rather than the council and mayor.

Like we said, Hamtramck is in a state of transition. This holiday season, let's dwell on the positives that make us one of the most interesting cities in the state — as well as the nation.

Our differences actually make us stronger.

Hamtramck has always persevered, and it will continue to do just

And that is plenty to be thankful for.

Publisher: John Ulaj • (248) 866-1110

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Walking tall: Bob Kozaren backed style with substance

Continued from front page

the GM plant, at least not at this point, he could do something to bolster the city's sagging spirits. His plan was simple - let's have a party.

Actually, a festival. A big festival.

Kozaren pulled in everyone he knew who could help and within a short time the first city festival was organized for late September. It really was too late in the year for that kind of activity as the weather was already beginning to turn chilly (it would be moved back to Labor Day weekend the following year), but that didn't stop the event from being a huge success, drawing several thousand people to Jos. Campau between Caniff and Carpenter for the weekend event.

But that Friday afternoon, just hours before the festival was to begin, no one was sure how it would turn out. But if Kozaren was worried, he didn't show it.

The festival was the first major success recorded, and it demonstrated an amazing talent that often overshadowed his abilities as a political and civic leader.

He knew how to put on a good show.

His administration would be marked by all kinds of profile events, whether it was city festivals, bringing the Stanly Cup to Hamtramck for a visit, staging a telethon to help an ailing Hamtramck child or welcoming a host of politicians and dignitaries from across the country.

congress-Governors, men, senators and even presidents came to Hamtramck during Kozaren's administration. The high point may have been the visit of Pope John Paul II in 1987.

Yet even as these events were presenting a positive image of Hamtramck, the financial situation continued to erode. Jos. Campau was losing its main retailers, the population was declining, labor strife was a persistent problem and every day seemed to bring a new challenge. In some cases, Kozaren

brought them on himself.



Above: Bob Kozaren commands the stage at a city festival featuring a variety of previous mayors. Below: Among those attending Kozaren's 60th birthday party was Gov. Jim Blanchard. Second from bottom: Kozaren and Judge Walter Paruk with a visiting Boy Scout troop. Bottom: He didn't show it often, but Kozaren could blaze with flashes of a fiery temper, as he did at an appearance before the







park on Jos. Campau was a brilliant stroke of public relations, but Kozaren stumbled over a critical element after it was built how to pay for it. Still, his enthusiasm and

energy managed achieve some nearly impossible successes. He played a pivotal role in clearing the obstacles in finalizing the deal for the GM Detroit-Hamtramck Assembly Plant, especially in managing to wrangle a favorable tax-sharing arrangement with the city of Detroit. That was helped greatly

by the good relationship Kozaren built with Detroit Mayor Coleman Young.

Kozaren also got the longstanding Urban Renewal lawsuit moving again mainly thanks to the trust he carefully crafted with all the parties involved.

These were things that were engineered behind the scenes, yet were vital to Hamtramck's future.

Kozaren's administration went through a lot of changes in the 18 years he served in office. Several long-time trusted aides died or left. And in time his patience seemed to wear thin with the unending problems.

It seemed as though he became more isolated in his office in city hall. He

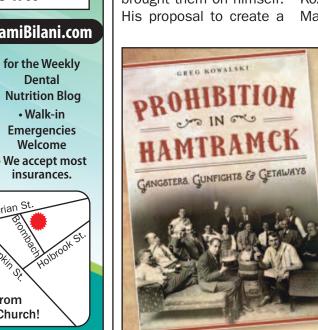
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Continued from page front page

at Conant and Evaline and take the DSR coach all the way out to Edgewater Park on the far northwest side of Detroit.

Walking with purpose, at a healthy pace, actually works to the benefit of mind and body, accelerating heart rate and increasing the flow of oxygen to the brain. We are more alert when we walk, and we need to be.

Nearly every time I'm out on foot I see drivers rolling through stop signs or turning into commercial driveways that cross over sidewalks. A cautionary note: even though pedestrians have the right of way, motorists are behind the wheel of heavy machinery on wheels. Be prepared to yield for safety's sake. We can address the politics of sharing the road later.

In the past few weeks I've had some walking companions, a pair of musicians from Berlin. Pilocka and Raza are staying at a house on E. Grand Blvd at Brush, in Detroit's North End. A walk from there to Cafe 1923, where they came for coffee last week, is exactly two miles. Berliners, walking miles at a time, day or

night, is the norm. The experience they had that day in Hamtramck was largely enabled by the fact that they were on foot. Outside the cafe they met some musicians who were to play that night at Kelly's Bar, on the opposite side

of Dubois St.

They also found their way to Elijah's, a performance space on Jos. Campau at Norwalk, where they met some other local artists. Connections were made German between and American creative young people — in Hamtramck — that could pay dividends down the road. Who knows, maybe friendships and future collaborations will develop from these chance meetings.

Earlier this month, on a summery November afternoon, Pilocka and I walked deep into the city's southend, from St. Aubin to Jos. Campau via Denton, then had dinner at Sheeba, where she later said she had the best hummus ever.

On another snowy night, I walked up Gallagher to meet my new Berlin friends at Royal Kabob on Caniff. We had food then walked across the street to Public Pool, where Detroit artist Olayami Dabls' Normal Nudity show of recently rediscovered watercolors is now up (through Dec. 19).

While we were there, Dabls walked in, as did Steve Hughes, a Hamtramck writer and publisher who was recently awarded his second Knight Arts grant and also won a Kresge Arts Fellowship in 2010. Dabls earned his Kresge fellowship in 2011 and is also a Knight Arts grant recipient.

These are heavyweight art guys, though you would never know it for their scruffy matter of fact humility. Everyone talked casually about the weather and the art. Again, it was great to see this serendipitous interaction between European and local artists.

A footnote about Public Pool: some cool stuff is upcoming there in the next few weeks.

The Hamtramck Free School, another Knight Arts award winner (it recently won \$30,000 in the latest round of challenge grants), is hosting a series of community music gatherings at Public Pool that invite locals to bring drum machines, samplers, turntables — basically anything but laptop computers — to make beats and produce music.

It's called Dubtramck and it happens Tuesdays and Thursdays, 3-6 p.m. through December. Kids, just walk up and start making tunes. Everyone in the neighborhood is welcome and it's free, naturally.

Also at Public Pool: on Wednesday, Dec. Michael Stone Richards, professor of critical theory, literature and visual studies at the College for Creative Studies, and editor of the arts journal Detroit Research, will talk about the work of Olayami Dabls and his place in the Detroit and African American art landscapes.

For the record, Stone Richards is also a recent Knight Arts grant winner. There is a ton of creative talent finding its way to Hamtramck at present. We're lucky we can just walk up, participate and experience it. Just like

(Walter Wasacz was born. and lives, walks and writes, in Hamtramck.)





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5 bedroom single house, for rent w/option to buy, no pets, land contract available, 313-366-1527. 12/4

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Early Childhood Elementary School News

The Early Childhood Elementary students marked the 50th day of school by dressing in 1950s clothes, enjoying root beer floats. having a hula hoop contest and dancing to 1950s music.

Kosciuszko Middle **School News**

The Student Council is hosting its 1st Annual Multicultural Night: "One night, One World" on Thursday, December 10 from 6-8

KMS students will be invited to present something from their heritage or something they have learned from their families. such as dancing, singing, art work, playing music, traditional dress or sharing a short story.

Participants have to be a student from KMS but they can have other family members or friends join in the presentation. A sign-up sheet has been sent home and needs to be turned in by Wednesday, December 2.

The community is welcome to join us and there will be a \$2 charge to enter. All proceeds collected at the door will go to help Student Council initiathroughout the tives school year.

Hamtramck High School News

The Hamtramck High School Parent Association is presenting "Parent University Hamtramck High 101" on Thursday, December 10 from 5:30 to 6:30 p.m. in the high school auditorium.

Topics to be covered are keys to your child's success, supporting your child, tutoring support, counseling support and making the grade in high school.

Light refreshments will be served. This is a parent and student event. We hope to see everyone there.

Holbrook Elementary School News

Holbrook Elementary School is seeking parent volunteers and involvement on our School Improvement Team/Committee.

We are also looking to create and sustain a PTSA (Parent, Teacher, Student Association).

These two groups will assist us in reaching out to our students and community on a scale much larger than we currently are able

Although a date for PTSA has not been set, parents can inquire by calling our office at (313) 872-3203, or emailing principal Myron Miller directly MMiller@hamtramck.k12. mi.us.

Typically PTSA meetings

are held before or after school and are approximately one hour in length. We are doing a wonderful job assisting our students in being successful, but we need you to help us reach many of our goals.

Dickinson West Elementary School News

Dickinson West will begin tutoring after school on Tuesdays and Thursdays. It will be from 3:10 to 4:10 p.m.. If you are interested in tutoring for your child, please see your child's teacher.

All Schools

- · Friday, November 27 -Sunday, November 29 - No school for all students. Thanksgiving break.
- Monday, November 30 - School resumes.
- Friday, December 11 End of Progress Report Period #2.
- · Thursday, December 17 - Progress Report #2 Distributed.

Athletic Events

- · Monday, November 30 - KMS Boys' Basketball vs. Henry Ford Academy at 4:30 p.m. Away.
 - · Wednesday, December
- 2 KMS Boys' Basketball vs. Eaton Academy at 4:30 p.m. Away.
- Friday, December 4 KMS Boys' Basketball vs. UPSM at 4:30 p.m. Home.

School Bell is compiled by Janice Gandelman





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Walking tall: Bob Kozaren backed style with substance

Continued from page 5

grew more defensive, especially after the U.S. Justice department raided his office, seizing financial documents, and generating speculation that he was misusing money from the city festivals.

Ultimately he charged with taking money raised at his annual fundraiser for personal use and not paying taxes on it. He was sentenced to do community service. He might have gotten a stiffer sentence, but the judge no doubt took note of the letters signed by dozens of persons testifying to Kozaren's character and his love for Hamtramck.

Even so, Kozaren would finally succumb to the changing nature of the city as it became even more diverse in the 1990s. People from around the world were moving into Hamtramck, so much so that the popular slogan the city adopted in the early 1980s "A Touch of Europe in America" no longer was

As the city changed, new voices arose, and Kozaren lost a tight race to Gary Zych, ending his 18 years in office in 1998 - the longest time served by any Hamtramck mayor.

The loss was deeply painful to him and he virtually disappeared from public view. It was only shortly before his death that he began to come forward again as he started attending Historical Commission meetings. As in the past, he was full of ideas, including holding a fundraising

telethon. But time was not on his side. On Dec. 20, 2007. he died of heart failure at age 73.

Regardless of his many accomplishments, most meaningful thing anyone could say of him is that he loved Hamtramck. Really loved Hamtramck.

And that's enough.



